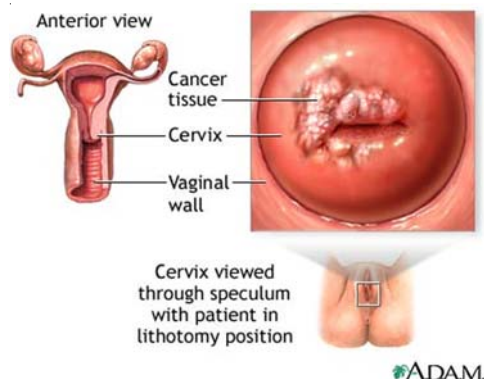


Utah Cancer Control Program

Cervical Cancer Fact Sheet



The development of cervical cancer is gradual and begins as a pre-cancerous condition called dysplasia. It is usually a slow-growing cancer and if caught early can be successfully treated. Routine Pap smears can detect early changes in the cells of the cervix allowing cervical cancer to be caught early.

WHAT IS CERVICAL CANCER?

Cervical cancer is a common cancer found in women and is a disease in which cancer or malignant cells are found in the tissues of the cervix.

In 2003, the American Cancer Society estimates in the U.S. there will be 12,200 new cases and 4,100 deaths from cervical cancer. 90% of cervical cancer cases can and should be detected early.

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTING CERVICAL CANCER?

The Pap Test has been performed since the 1940's, it is simple, inexpensive, and accurate.

All women should have a yearly Pap Test starting at age 18 or when they become sexually active.

However, many women do not believe that they need to get a yearly pap test.

CAUSES & INCIDENCE

The development of cervical cancer is gradual and begins as a pre-cancerous condition. In this form, it is 100% treatable, usually without the need for a hysterectomy (surgical removal of the uterus).

In the pre-cancerous stage, depending on its severity, problems can resolve without treatment, particularly in young women. However, it often progresses to actual cancer called "carcinoma in situ" (CIS)

It may take years for pre-cancer cells to turn into carcinoma in

situ, but once this process occurs the cancer can quickly spread deeper into nearby tissues or other organs, such as the bladder, intestines, liver, or lungs.

Usually patients with cervical cancer do not experience problems until the cancer is advanced and has spread.

A Pap smear can pick up dysplasia and early forms of cervical cancer that have not yet spread. Most women diagnosed today with cervical cancer have either not had regular Pap smears or they have not followed up after having an abnormal smear.

WHAT INCREASES MY RISK OF CERVICAL CANCER?

Age

Ethnicity

Multiple Sex Partners

Gender

Race

Smoking

HIV Infection

First Intercourse at early age

Genital Infection with Human Papillomavirus (HPV)